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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/707,535	12/19/2003	Gary A. KNEEZEL	112222	1534
27074	7590	05/22/2006	EXAMINER	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC. P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320				MENON, KRISHNAN S
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		1723		

DATE MAILED: 05/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/707,535	KNEEZEL, GARY A.
	Examiner Krishnan S. Menon	Art Unit 1723

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 December 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6-25 and 31-39 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-5,26-30,40 and 41 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-41 are pending as amended 5/11/06.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of claims in the reply filed on 5/11/06 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the restriction requirement does not meet the two requirements as per MPEP 803. This is not found persuasive because the election requirement was for independent and distinct species, and there is a serious burden on the examiner to search the nine different species (MPEP 808.01).

Applicant may overcome the restriction requirement by showing that the species are obvious variations, and not independent and distinct. Applicant's argument that the reference Goldsmith is currently classified only in class 210 and 45 (typo: should be 55), and that there appears to be no relevant subclasses which would apply to only a subset of the species, is not very convincing, because the search is not conducted based on the Goldsmith reference, but on applicant's claims; not having a sub-class specific to all the claimed species adds to the burden of search.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

- (a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.
- (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.
- (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

1. Claims 1,2,4,5,26,28, 29, 40 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Goldsmith et al (US 5,114,581).

Goldsmith teaches a first substrate (14 – ceramic monolith, figure 1), a second substrate (28 – microporous membrane on the ceramic monolith layer 14). The plurality of first and second passageways are 22 and 26 (figure 1), plurality of the third passageways are formed on the second substrate – the micropores through the membrane. Fourth and fifth passageways are the inlet (16) and outlet (18). See column 3 lines 41-66. Claim 26, 28 and 29 have the passageways numbered in a different order, but relates to the same structure, and the reference reads on the claims. Fluid source is connected to the inlet 16; fluid sink (or outlet connected to the outlet 18: these are inherent to the system – see column 3 lines 9-24. The newly added limitation by amendment of 5/11/06, “etched into” or “formed by etching” is a process limitation in the product claim, which is not patentable. “[E]ven though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious

from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process.” In re Thorpe, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985).

Applicant’s argument that the “etched” structure is different from the porous structure of the reference is not persuasive because applicant discloses in the specification paragraph 6-13 that applicant’s invention “separately provides systems and methods that eliminate one or more of the geometric limitations of the incorporated 748 patent. This invention separately provides internal filter as having many fluidically parallel filter pore passageways”. Such geometric limitations include size and shape of passages (paragraph 6). In paragraphs 57,58 and 67, applicant discloses that the process can be any known or later developed method. Also, no supporting disclosure was found for the arguments that the “... passages are of predetermined number, of equal cross-sectional shape and dimension, and predetermined path.” Paragraph 6 seems to disclose that applicant’s process is not limited by such geometrical limitations.

Claims 40 and 41: pores forming the third passages in Goldsmith are ***fluidically parallel*** to one-another. They provide parallel flow paths for the fluids to flow from entrance passages 22 to exit passages 26 in figures 1-3.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

- (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 3,27 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Goldsmith et al.

Claims 3,27 and 30 depend from claims 1 and 26, and differ from the teaching of the reference in having a microfluidic device connected to the inlet or the outlet passageway. Goldsmith teaches the device as for filtering feed stock, and inherently would have device(s) connected to the inlet that supply feed and device(s) connected to the outlet that accept the filtrate. They being microfluidic devices only would indicate the filter being of proportionately smaller size, which is not a patentable limitation. *In re Rose*, 220 F.2d 459, 105 USPQ 237 (CCPA 1955) (Claims directed to a lumber package “of appreciable size and weight requiring handling by a lift truck” where held unpatentable over prior art lumber packages which could be lifted by hand because limitations relating to the size of the package were not sufficient to patentably distinguish over the prior art.); *In re Rinehart*, 531 F.2d 1048, 189 USPQ 143 (CCPA 1976) (“mere scaling up of a prior art process capable of being scaled up, if such were the case, would not establish patentability in a claim to an old process so scaled.” 531 F.2d at 1053, 189 USPQ at 148.). *In Gardner v. TEC Systems, Inc.*, 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 830, 225 USPQ 232 (1984), the Federal Circuit held that, where the only difference between the prior art and the claims was a recitation of relative dimensions of the claimed device and a device having the claimed relative dimensions would not perform differently than the prior art device, the claimed device was not patentably distinct from the prior art.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 5/11/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Response to the arguments is provided in the rejection itself.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Krishnan S. Menon whose telephone number is 571-272-1143. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda L. Walker can be reached on 571-272-1151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Krishnan S. Menon
Patent Examiner
5/17/06